THE OPINION OF Mr. PERKINS, and Mr. BOLTON, AND OTHERS,

Concerning the SPORT of COCK-FIGHTING.

Publisht formerly in their VVorks, and now set forth to shew, That it is not a Recreation meet for CHRISTIANS, though so commonly used by those who own that Name.

By EDMUND ELIS, Master of Arts, and sometimes Fellow of *Baliol* Colledge in *Oxford*.

---

2 Sam. 6. 22.

I will yet be more vile than thus.

OXFORD,

Printed by *A. L.* in the Year, 1660.

To my moſt dearly beloved, and honoured Friends,

EDMUND FORTESCUE,

of *Fallapit*, in *Devon*. Eſq.

AND

Mr. DENNIS GRENVILE,

Younger Sonne of Sir *Bevill Grenvile*,

KNIGHT.

SIRS,

I *Preſent you theſe Papers, chiefly for theſe two Reaſons: Firſt, becauſe I know you are ſincerely of the ſame Opinion, which by them I manifeſt to the World that I am of; and therefore they muſt needs beacceptable unto you. Secondly, becauſe you underſtand me aright in thoſe Actions, which the generality of other men, Good and Bad, who have occaſion to take notice of them,*

eſteem as Monſtrous, *and* Improper *for me* : *Not rightly apprehending their* Symmetry, *and* Proportion *to ſuch Principles, as they themſelves muſt neceſſarily acknowledge to be Good for me to Act by. And whilſt there is any ſinne to be diſcerned in me (which alaſſe muſt needs bee as long as I continue in this* Earthly Tabernacle) *it cannot be otherwiſe : by reaſon of the* confus'd *Notions men commonly have of ſuch Actions, as proceed from a ſoul* differently inclin'd; *to wit, by the ſtrength it retaines of the* Old Nature, *and by what it hath receiv'd of the* New. *That ſtreame of* Grace *which Flows continually through the whole courſe of the Lives and Converſations of thoſe who are* Born again, *mixing it ſelf with the Ocean (as it were) of ſo many Sins and Infirmities, and Civil Actions, is no more to be diſcern'd by the Generality, than a ſtream of* freſh *in* ſalt waters : *'Tis the* Taſt, *not the* Sight, *the knowledge of the* Heart, *not of the* Brain, *that apprehends the Integrity of any mans Actions : neither do I any more believe, that all Good men throughly apprehend thoſe Actions which ſometimes they are pleaſed to Cenſure, than that any man, who has, as they ſay,* a Judicious Palate, *ſhould be able to* diſtinguiſh Wines, *or any other* Liquors, *when he does but* See *them.*

My Deare Friends, *Farewell, and Pray earneſtly, that my Faith may not faile me: for, me-thinkes, comming out into the SEA of the World, upon this occaſion, my Conſcience commanding me, I am in the caſe that* Peter *was in, when* He walked on the water to goe to JESUS, *as ſoon as* He ſaid, Come. Mat.14.29.

To my honoured Friend,

Mr. EDMUND ELIS.

My deareſt Friend,

SInce you have given me notice of this your Noble Deſigne, I think my ſelfe oblig'd to congratulate you in it, and to bleſſe GOD for it: Being ſo highly oblig'd unto you, for thoſe good Inſtructions, and pious Admonitions, which from time to time, I have receiv'd from you, and although I have not trod, ſo exactly, in thoſe wayes, which you have directed me to, yet 'tis my earneſt Prayer to GOD, that Gentlemen would endeavour, but as I have done, which if they did, ſurely ſuch vaine Sports, and bloody Recreations, which you treat of, would no longer be pleaſing to them. I know (to my griefI ſpeak it) that the generality of Gentlemen, are no more capable to apprehend your Diſcourſes, than a man, the Pores of his Head being ſtopt by the extreamity of Cold, is able to diſtinguiſh betwixt ill,

ill, and wholsome Sents. It has been an Experiment tryed throughout all Ages, since the Creation, that the Workers of Iniquity hate Light, that they can't endure to be told of any Sinne, which they Indulge unto themselve,. The more Ingenious the men be (unlesse truly Christian, unlesse they live according to Christs Gospel, and would rather loose an Eye, their Right hand, nay their Lives, than wittingly, and willingly commit the least sinne) the more you must expect, they will Raile at, and Revile you; whatever they pretend to your face, they would cut your throat with all their hearts: they play the Wolfe in the *Sheeps cloathing*, hide the Vultures heart under the Doves breast: What can you expect from such men, but scoffs, *&c?* who in corners (not in publick, for fear that small *Rod of Justice*, which is yet left, might make them smart.) Laugh at GOD, and despise what they themselves Preach: A wonder, that God inflicts not some immediate Punishment on such notorious Offendors, who deride the Wisdome of the Mysterie of the Blessed Trinity; but alas! what will become of such men? who doe not onely *neglect*, but *despise so great Salvation*, though GOD's Revenging Hand (which is able to grind them to powder) does forbeare them for some small season, yet they shall surely one day most sadly feele it, when coales of Fire, and Brimstone, and an horrible *Tempest* shall be *showr'd* down on their heads, by the Revenging hand of an Angry God.

How many thousands of Gentlemen are there

in

in this Nation, who far more dread the Thoughts of a years Impriſonment, being by that to be *Deprived* of their Jolly companions, than that ſad *Divorce* betwixt the *Soul and Body*. Their eyes are ſo dimm, by their long ſtubborn perſiſtence in the *wayes of* D*arkneſſe*, that they cannot ſee the *Paths of Light*; and rather than they will paine themſelves to pluck off that Filme, which *darkens* their *Sight*, they will periſh for ever: they'l rather be Gods Enemies, ſo they gain a good Reputation in the world, being called *Prudent*, D*iſcreet*, &c. though that's but a miſtake; than bee his Faithful Stewards, and be Back-bited, and Rayled on by the Ignorant of theſe our dayes: did but men Practiſe as they ſay they Believe, we ſhould not ſee ſo great Debaucheries as now there are; they had rather be in their Studies, with Tears in their Eyes, and Books in their Hands, than at the Alehouſe, toſſing of Cups, and delighting to ſee the Innocent Blood of poor Creatures. This your Diſcourſe will Try the Pureneſſe of mens *Hearts*, as Fire Gold. You muſt expect that the Mouthes of thoſe who continually Bark at you, being already open, will not cloſe without ſome noyſe; they will try their utmoſt to affright you from undertaking ſuch Noble Deſignes, whereby you doe eminently ſerve God, and ſatisfie the *Deſires* of your Brethren. Well, my Deare Friend, Go on, and Proſper in all your Endeavours, and be ſure, that though men doe ſtrive, to caſt Aſperſions on your Candid name, yet in their *Hearts* they *Feare* and *Reverence* you. They are afraid to own that

in Publick before men, which in *Pivate Chambers* they twattle before Boyes. I say, my Friend, let them be what they will, they are beneath your notice, since by such opprobrious Speeches they cease from being Christians: They cannot apprehend *Terrestrial Freindship*, how then can they *Heavenly?* 'Tis a General Observation, That severall men of one Profession, alwayes discommend, and undervalue one the others work; and truly this is the same case with you: You, and Others, are all Baptized in *Christs Name*, and since you Own what there you Vowed to Do, in which they are so Defective, they Envie, and Revile you, they hate to see themselves out-done by one of their own Calling: Therefore you must expect, that all Formall Christians, who will not goe to Heaven, unlesse they might have the World for their Companion on their Journey, *Who have a Forme of Godlynesse, but deny the Power thereof, who mind earthly things, who are lovers of Pleasures more than lovers of God, who delight in the Creature more than the Creatour*: I say you may be sure, that the greatest part of those who call themselves Christians, being ignorant of the Spirit and Life of Religion, having Religion only in their Phansie, and thinking, the very Acts of it but wild Chimeraes, make it an *Ens Rationis*, or an empty notion, will despise and undervalue your Writings: But blessed be that God, who has, and will uphold you against the devilliſh Oppositions of Malicious men, who has made that Gall which has been cast in your Teeth, to prove *sweeter than Hony in your Belly*.

I could ſay more, did I not fear that I have already tyr'd you: I can aſſure you, that no man can have a more Perfect *Friendſhip* for any one than I have for you. You know that I am,

March 20. --59.

My Deareſt Freind,

your moſt Affectionate

Edmund Forteſcue.

THough it be my Opinion, that the Sport of *Cock-fighting* is abſolutely ſinnefull, yet I would not have thee think (as the *Vulgar* will be ready to ſay) that I eſteem as *Unregenerate* all thoſe who are of a contrary Judgement: I doe not ſo little conſider that of the Apoſtle, *In many things we offend all*: And certainly the immediate cauſe of our *Offences*, the *Perverſneſſe* of the *Will* alwayes proceeds from the *Underſtanding*, or *Judgement perverted* (in apprehending any thing the *wrong way*) by which it is inclin'd to Accept, or Refuſe the Object, or Thing Propos'd: But though I doe not conceive that the Ignorance of the impiety of this Sport is altogether inconſiſtent with a *Regenerate eſtate*, or the *Habit of true Godlyneſſe*, in ſome Degree, yet I am not afraid to make known to the World, that I cannot imagine how any man, whilſt he is *Actually* Like unto God, *The Father of Mercies*, can poſſibly Delight, and Recreate himſelfe in ſeeing his Fellow Creatures (which are infinitely leſſe inferiour to us, than we to Our, and Their Creator) ſo Subtile and Active to *Wound* and *Deſtroy* each other. Having this Opinion of the Sport of *Cock-fights*, and ſeeing it ſo frequently uſed in the Country where I live, no man (that I can hear of) oppoſing it as abſolutely ſinnefull, I could not retaine the confidence I have, that I am indeed a Faithfull Servant of the Great

Great G O D in the Goſpel of his Son, and a True Lover of the Soules of Men, if I ſhould not venture to Oppoſe it my ſelf; though J am not ignorant, that endeavouring to Deſtroy this common Opinion, That this Sport is meet for Chriſtians, J muſt neceſſarily expect, to be counted a *Fool-hardy*, and *Imprudent fellow*. Me-thinks I hear many men ſaying unto me, appearing in publick upon this occaſion, as *Eliab* (1 *Sam.* 17. 28.) ſaid to his Brother *David*, *I know thy Pride, and the naughtyneſſe of thine heart*. This indeed would ſomewhat diſturb me, if I did not conſider, that *Omniſcience* is one of the *Attributes* of the God whom I ſerve.

Thinking with my ſelfe, what meanes J ſhould uſe to effect this Deſigne, to convince the world, that the temper and diſpoſition of any mans ſoule, whilſt he *actually* delights in ſuch a Sport, muſt neceſſarily be offenſive to God; at laſt J conſider'd (though it be my opinion) that for any man, who has attain'd to a competent degree of the Art of Expreſſion, to publiſh thoſe Notions which he has gather'd from his own Experience, of ſuch Chriſtian Truths, as are (in ſome ſort) generally believed, in his own words, is a work moſt acceptable to the God of Truth: for certainly thoſe Notions of ſpirituall things which fix themſelves, & reſide in the *Head* onely of the generality of thoſe who are call'd Chriſtians, are uſually Guided unto the Heart by ſuch Expreſſions of the ſame things, as Come from the *Hearts* of others: Yet, I ſay, at laſt J conſider'd, that Truths of this nature, which are like to find ſo much Oppoſition, will hardly be Recei-

ved by any, who now Oppoſe them, unleſſe they be Brought in (as it were) with *Drum* and *Trumpet*: J mean by the hands of ſome *famous*, and *excellent Writers*; And therefore J would not (at preſent) write of this ſubject any more than only to ſpeak my opinion; but have rather choſen to ſhew the world, what ſome Eminent Divines have written of it, which J conceive was never yet read and Conſider'd by any of thoſe who delight in ſuch Sports, and profeſſe to walke as CHRIST walked.

And here, in the name of a Chriſtian, J call to my ayd (in endeavouring to evince this, that ſuch a temper, as may *actually* conſiſt with a Delight in ſuch Sports, muſt needs be *Vnchriſtian*) all thoſe who are of the ſame opinion, and withall are conſcious to themſelves, that God has given them an Art of Perſwaſion, an Ability of conveighing their own Thoughts into the Breaſts of others, not only of thoſe who are ſimply void of them, but of thoſe alſo who oppugne and reſiſt them. Such men J entreat upon all occaſions to manifeſt their diſlike of ſuch Sports, and their Reaſons for it.

If theſe Papers ſhall chance to bee ſeen by the Worthy, and Renowned Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*, J ſhall humbly entreat him, as one who Serves with him under Chriſt, *the Captain of our Salvation*, to afford me ſome Aide in this Combate with the World, if he be of the ſame Judgement, as, by his Works, J preſume he is. J doubt not but the ſmall thoughts and phanſies, which thoſe who Delight in this Sport, are apt to conceive in favour

of

of it, which ariſe in their minds like *miſts*, and *dark vapours* to obſcure the reaſon of any thing they can ordinarily hear ſpoken againſt it, would ſuddenly *vaniſh*, like a *Morning Cloud*, when the *Sun* appears, if it ſhould be oppos'd by ſo Noble a Perſon; whoſe *Style*, like a *Diamond*, is *Bright* and *Solid*; whoſe excellent *Rhetorick* and *Beauty* of *Expreſſion*, does not like weaker *Beauty* conſiſt chiefly in *Colour* and *Complexion* (in words, which are ſo apt to *take*, as they ſay) but in *Symmetry*, and exact Proportion. And J hope, the Amiable Subject of his Beauteous Expreſſions will in time (by the Help of Gods Spirit) Draw unto it ſelf the Love of many, who as yet are *Lovers* of the World. If the Thoughts J have expreſt of this Sport be not ſuitable to His, J deſire to be better inform'd by Him: For, J muſt profeſſe, at preſent it *ſcandals* me extreamly, to ſee *Chriſtians*, Thoſe who profeſſe to have their Boſomes a Neſt for the *Heavenly Dove*, to be Companions of the *Lamb of God*, to *Recreate* themſelves in *Blood*, though it be of the meaneſt Creatures: And to Me no mans Reaſon ſeemes more Strong, or Expreſſion more Clear, than what J find in the Writings of this Excellent Perſon: So that whatever he ſhall be pleaſed to Write on this Subject, 'twill either make me ſee my ſelfe in an *Errour*, or *Lead* me on further in the *Way of Truth*; if my Opinion be True indeed, which as yet J have no reaſon to doubt, but that ſo many *ſpeak* againſt it.

All that J have to ſay farther is this, that if J did not as much *Deſpiſe the Shame*, as J am thought to Deſire the Prayſe of the World, J would rather

ther Loſe the Hand J Write with, than employ my Pen upon ſuch an Occaſion. But J feare not the Termes of *Fool*, or *Mad man*: 'Twas ſaid of my SAVIOUR, *He hath a Devill.* My LORD was Reviled, ſhall J be Applauded? What greater Comfort can a *Chriſtian* have, than in Thinking how like He is to the *Lord of Glory*, not only in what he Did, but even alſo in what He *Suffer'd.*

OF

COCK-FIGHTS;

And ſuch like Sports.

THE *Bayting of the Bear, and Cock fights, are no meet Recreations. The Bayting of the Bull hath his uſe, and therefore it is commanded by Civil Authority, and ſo have not theſe: And the Antipathy, and Cruelty, which one Beaſt ſheweth to another, is the fruit of our Rebellion againſt God, and ſhould rather move us to mourn than to rejoice.* Theſe are the words of the moſt Learned, and Godly Mr. *PERKINS*, in that Famous Treatiſe of the *Caſes of Conſcience* (Printed in *Quarto* A.D. ---32.) *p.*346.

That *Man of God* Mr. *BOLTON* was of the ſame mind with Mr *PERKINS* concerning ſuch Sports. *Conſider*, ſaies he (in his Excellent Treatiſe entitled, *Generall Directions for a Comfortable walking*

walking with GOD, p.156.) *That Rule which Divines give about Recreations: Wee must not make Gods Judgements, and Punishments, either upon Man, or Beast, the matter and object of them. Now, best Divines hold, that Enmity amongst themselves, was a fruit of our Rebellion against God, and more generall Judgement inflicted upon the Creature after the Fall. Which miserie comming upon them by our meanes, should rather break our hearts, and make them bleed, than minister matter of glorying in our shame, and vexing those very vexations which our impiety hath put upon them. Alas, sinfull man! what an heart hast thou, that canst take delight in the cruel tormenting of a dumb creature? Is it not too much for thee to behold with dry eyes, that which onely thy sinne hath impreſt upon it, but that thou must barbarously also presse its oppressions, and make thy self merry with the bleeding miseries of that poore harmlesse thing, which in its kind is much more, and far better serviceable to the Creator than thy self? Yet I deny not, but that there may be another lawfull use of this Antipathy, for the destroying of hurtfull, and the enjoying of usefull creatures; so that it be without any taint, or aspersion of cruelty on our parts, or needlesse tormenting of the silly beasts.*

Mr, DOD, and Mr. CLEAVER (*scorn'd* by none but those whose *Revilings* are *Praises*) in their Exposition of these words of *Solomon* (*Prov.*12.10.) *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast*, having spoken against the hard usage of Labouring Beasts, as Horses, &c. Conclude thus: *And yet in another sort more extremity than this is us'd a-*

gainſt other ſorts of Creatures, and that is, when men make a Sport of making them miſerable; when it is a pleaſure to put them to pain; when it is a paſſe-time to behold their torment and tearing. This proceedeth not of a tender heart: this is not the worke of Righteouſneſſe: this delight will leave no comfort behind it. Have our ſinnes in Adam *brought ſuch calamities upon them, and ſhall we adde unto them by cruelty in our own perſons? Have our corruptions been a cauſe of that fierceneſs that is in many of them one againſt another, and ſhall we ſolace our ſelves in ſeeing them execute it?*

What Holy *CHRYSOSTOME* would have ſaid of this Sport, if he had had an occaſion to Treat of it, wee may eaſily gather from theſe words in his 29th *Homilie* on the Epiſtle to the *Romans*. Σφόδρα εἰσὶν αἱ τῶν ἁγίων ψυχαὶ ἥμεροι, καὶ φιλάνθρωποι, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀλλοτρίους. Καὶ μέχρι τῶν ἀλόγων αὐτῶν τάυτην ἐκτείνουσι τὴν ἡμερότητα; διὰ τοῦτο καὶ σοφός τις ἔλεγε: Δίκαιος οἰκτείρει ψυχὰς κτηνῶν αὐτοῦ.

The Souls of thoſe that are truly Pious, are exceeding *Mild* and *Gentle*, not onely towards *Relations*, but *Strangers* alſo. And this *Lenity* (or Softneſſe of Heart) they extend even to Irrationall Creatures. Therefore the *Wiſe Man* ſaith, *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beaſt*, Prov. 12.10.

TO

To all those who affect this Sport.

SIRS,

HAving shewn you what These Men thought of the Sport you Affect, I shall entreat you, if you believe Sin to be a matter of *Eternall Concernment*, to Consider seriously what here you have Read. If you are not convinced at present, that these Learned, and Godly men were *in the right*, yet I doubt not but you will be in time, if you more fully Consider the Matter without Prejudice: At least, if you are *Regenerate Persons*: For, I conceive, by the *Instinct* of the *New Creature*, a man may often *Perceive* that to be a *Sinne*, whose *Sinfulnesse* is not Capable of any *Expresse* (or *Verball*) Demonstration, *viz.* Apprehending it so to be meerly through a *Sense* of the *Antipathy* it has to That in him, which he knows *is Born of God*. Whether or no, This be but a *Phanatick Notion*; And whether or no the Printing of these Papers, and such like Actions of mine, be indeed so foolish, and imprudent, as the World Judges them to be, I'le appeal onely for my own satisfaction

ction to *the onely Wiſe GOD*. Yet I ſhall not deny to render an Account of any of my Actions (in which I doe, and muſt uſually thwart the example of the Generality of Men (*Good*, and *Bad*) to any Man, whoſe *Authority* Obliges him (in any reſpect) to demand it of me, as my *Lawfull Superiour*, or *Conſcience*, as my *Fellow Chriſtian*.

FINIS.